



**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY  
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**



POLICY NUMBER	
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**SUBJECT: STATE POLICE RECRUITING AND SELECTION**

## **1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to establish a written process to efficiently and effectively recruit and select capable, qualified applicants through a non-discriminatory process for the New Mexico State Police.

## **2.0 POLICY**

It is the policy of the New Mexico State Police to actively recruit, screen, and select qualified candidates for commissioned positions within the department. This process will have measures in place to safeguard the integrity of the process, as well as the privacy of the candidates.

## **3.0 APPLICABILITY**

All commissioned employees and applicants of the New Mexico State Police.

## **4.0 REFERENCES**

- A. New Mexico Statutes 29-2-7 and 29-2-8, NMSA 1978**
- B. The Cooper Institute Age and Gender Fitness Norms**
- C. Police Officer Selection Test – POST Exam**
- D. 1.18.790 NMAC – Executive Records Retention Schedule**
- E. CALEA Chapter 31 – Recruitment**
- F. CALEA Chapter 32 – Selection**

## **5.0 DEFINITIONS**

- A. Applicant** – Any person interested in becoming an employee of the Department of Public Safety, State Police Division.
- B. Background Investigator** – A commissioned State Police officer or designee approved by the Chief of State Police assigned to investigate an applicant's background for entrance into the State Police Academy.
- C. Lead Recruiter** – A commissioned State Police officer assigned to the Training and Recruiting Bureau in charge of all field recruiters, advertising, the review of applications, and the recruiting process.
- D. PT** – Physical training, the systematic use of exercises to promote bodily fitness and strength.
- E. Active or Reserve Duty Time**- In regard to National Guard (State time), Active time will only be considered if it is deployed or training time.

**6.0 PROCEDURE****A. Recruitment**

1. The State Police Training and Recruiting Bureau shall maintain a recruitment plan that includes, minimally, the following:
  - a. A statement of objectives that is updated as needed.
  - b. A plan of action designed to meet the requirements of the recruitment plan.
  - c. A procedure to evaluate progress in achieving the objectives defined in the recruitment plan.
  - d. The recruitment plan shall be revised and re-issued as new objectives are identified.
2. The Training and Recruiting Bureau shall develop a training curriculum for department recruiters concerning department personnel matters, with an emphasis on equal employment opportunity. All employees who are assigned recruiting duties, either full or part-time, shall receive this training prior to assuming their roles as recruiters.
3. Recruitment efforts should be made to maintain a gender and ethnic composition for the sworn ranks in approximate proportion to the makeup of the available workforce in the agency's service community.
4. The Training and Recruiting Bureau shall maintain contact with applicants for all positions by providing updates after each phase of the application process; this will be done in writing. These efforts will be documented and maintained in the applicants' files.
5. The Training and Recruiting Bureau shall advertise all entry-level job vacancies through the use of media, local governmental employment agencies, and community service organizations, as appropriate. The advertisement shall include:
  - a. Information concerning the Department as an equal employment opportunity organization.
  - b. Any official application deadlines.
  - c. A description of the duties to be performed, responsibilities, skills, and education required, and other minimum requirements.

**B. Commissioned Officer Recruit Selection**

1. All elements of the selection process use only those rating criteria or minimum qualifications that are job-related. Applicants for appointment as a commissioned officer must meet the following minimum qualifications and evaluation factors:
  - a. Be at least twenty-one (21) years of age at the time of graduation from the State Police Academy with no maximum age limit.
  - b. Be a citizen of the United States of America.
  - c. Possess a high school diploma or GED.
  - d. Have no felony convictions.
  - e. Be of good moral character.
  - f. Have never been dishonorably discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces.
  - g. New officers must have attained (60) college credit hours from an accredited institution at the time of their appointment. The Chief may appoint a recruit as an officer provided they have at least thirty (30) college credit hours; however

## STATE POLICE RECRUITING AND SELECTION

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such officers must attain a total of sixty (60) hours within two (2) years of employment. The educational requirements may be waived if applicants have served as a certified law enforcement officer or in the U.S. Armed Forces (active or reserve duty) for a minimum of two (2) years. Veterans or current members of the U.S. Armed Forces must provide an official DD-214. See Section C. *Probationary Period* for a time extension to obtain credit hours.

- h. Vision must be 20/30 corrected or 20/100 uncorrected, with normal depth perception and satisfactory color vision. If an applicant does not pass the color vision test during his or her medical examination, then the applicant must pass the LEA Color Vision Accommodation Field Exam (LEA-CV).
- i. Comply with the New Mexico State Police Anti-Drug Use Policy:
  - i. Any use of steroids within eighteen (18) months of the application deadline is disqualifying unless prescribed for use due to a documented medical condition.
  - ii. Any use of marijuana within twenty-four (24) months of the application deadline is disqualifying.
  - iii. Any use of barbiturates, stimulants, or hashish within twenty-four (24) months of the application deadline is disqualifying.
  - iv. Any use of cocaine, LSD, Methamphetamine, mushrooms, ecstasy, within five (5) years of the application deadline is disqualifying.
  - v. Any use of PCP within ten (10) Years of the application deadline is disqualifying.
  - vi. Any abuse of opiates such as Hydrocodone, Oxycodone, Percocet, Roxicet, Percodan, or any pain killer containing opiates, where there is an identifiable pattern of abuse (prescribed or not) will disqualify the applicant.
  - vii. Any use of Heroin within (ten) 10 Years of the application deadline is disqualifying.
  - viii. Peyote used for religious purposes is not disqualifying.
  - ix. Any use of any controlled substance while employed as a law enforcement officer or correction officer is disqualifying.
  - x. Any use of synthetic cannabinoids such as bath salts and spice within twenty-four (24) months of the application deadline is disqualifying.
  - xi. Any sale, manufacture, or distribution of any controlled substance as an adult (>17) will be a lifetime disqualifier. If the crime was committed as a juvenile the following factors should be considered: The frequency of the behavior; the quantity of the drugs involved; and the type of drug.
- j. No DWI convictions within thirty-six (36) months of the application deadline.
- k. Shall not falsify or omit any information from the application.
- l. Applicants must not possess any domestic violence convictions, including but not limited to plea agreements, differed sentences, or prosecution dismissals. This includes self-admission of domestic violence whether reported or not will be a lifetime disqualifier unless the case was dismissed for lack of evidence.

- m. Pass a physical assessment consisting of the academy entry standards set by the NMLEA. Applicants must pass each portion of the physical assessment prior to the Chief's final selection.
  - n. Pass a written examination (**Police Officer Selection Test**) at 70% or greater.
  - o. Undergo a polygraph examination.
  - p. Pass a background examination.
  - q. Pass a medical examination.
  - r. Pass a psychological examination.
2. Lateral Applicant Selection Process
- a. At the time of application, the applicant must be employed by a law enforcement agency within the state of New Mexico. Applicants must have a minimum of 2 years of experience as an officer certified by the NMLEA.
  - b. Have no felony convictions, history of criminal activity, improper conduct, or poor driving record which may affect the suitability for law enforcement work.
  - c. Applicants must not possess any domestic violence convictions, including but not limited to plea agreements, differed sentences, or prosecution dismissals. This includes self-admission of domestic violence whether reported or not will be a lifetime disqualifier unless the case was dismissed for lack of evidence.
  - d. Applicants must be of good moral character.
  - e. Vision must be 20/30 corrected or 20/100 uncorrected, with normal depth perception and satisfactory color vision.
  - f. Must be in excellent physical health, without any conditions which would restrict the ability to effectively perform the duties of a New Mexico State Police Officer.
  - g. Comply with the New Mexico State Police Anti-Drug Use Policy:
    - i. Any use of steroids within eighteen (18) months of the application deadline is disqualifying unless prescribed for use due to a documented medical condition.
    - ii. Any use of opiates such as Hydrocodone, Oxycodone, Percocet, Roxicet, Percodan, or any pain killer containing opiates within eighteen (18) months of the application deadline is disqualifying unless prescribed for use due to a documented medical condition.
    - iii. Any use of marijuana within twenty-four (24) months of the application deadline is disqualifying.
    - iv. Any use of barbiturates, stimulants, or hashish within twenty-four (24) months of the application deadline is disqualifying.
    - v. Any use of cocaine, LSD, Methamphetamine, mushrooms, ecstasy, within five (5) years of the application deadline is disqualifying.
    - vi. Any use of PCP within ten (10) Years of the application deadline is disqualifying.
    - vii. Any use of Heroin within (ten) 10 Years of the application deadline is disqualifying.

- viii. Peyote used for religious purposes is not disqualifying.
  - ix. Any use of any controlled substance while employed as a law enforcement officer or correction officer is disqualifying.
  - x. Any use of synthetic cannabinoids such as bath salts and spice within twenty-four (24) months of the application deadline is disqualifying.
  - xi. Any sale, manufacture, or distribution of any controlled substance as an adult (>17) will be a lifetime disqualifier. If the crime was committed as a juvenile the following factors should be considered: The frequency of the behavior; the quantity of the drugs involved; and the type of drug.
  - h. No DWI convictions within thirty-six (36) months of the application deadline.
  - i. Shall not falsify or omit any information from the application.
  - j. Pass a physical assessment consisting of the academy entry standards set by the NMLEA. Applicants must pass each portion of the physical assessment prior to the Chief's final selection.
  - k. Pass a written examination (**Police Officer Selection Test**) at 70% or greater.
  - l. Undergo a polygraph examination.
  - m. Pass a background examination.
  - n. Pass a medical examination.
  - o. Undergo a psychological examination.
3. Elements and Activities in the Selection Process for commissioned officers:
- a. The New Mexico State Police application may be found and must be completed online at: <http://www.nmsp.dps.state.nm.us/>.
    - i. Applications for all positions will not be rejected due to minor omissions or deficiencies that can be corrected prior to the written and physical fitness testing portion of the application process. However, corrections to these omissions or deficiencies indicating the concealment of, or reluctance to disclose critical information, which would reflect poorly on the candidate, shall not be allowed.
    - ii. Applicants who do not meet the minimum entry qualification requirements will be notified in writing of their disqualification.
  - b. Upon successful completion of the PT assessment and written exam, the applicant will then be notified and scheduled for a polygraph examination. All polygraph examinations will be conducted by personnel trained in these areas.
    - i. Applicants will be provided with a list of areas, from which polygraph questions will be taken, prior to the actual examination.
    - ii. All pre-employment questionnaires are kept confidential.
    - iii. Polygraph results will be used as an investigative aid only and in no way will the polygraph be the sole determination for disqualifying someone from the application/recruitment process.
  - c. At the time of application, candidates are informed in writing of the following:
    - i. The elements of the selection process.

- ii. The expected duration of the selection process.
    - iii. The agency's procedure for reapplication.
  - d. Upon completion of the polygraph examination, the application will be sent for a background investigation to be conducted by a background investigator trained in gathering the required information. The background investigation shall include, at a minimum:
    - i. Criminal history.
    - ii. Verification of at least six personal references.
    - iii. Verification of qualifying credentials.
  - e. Upon completion of the background phase, the applicant will be notified and scheduled for the oral interview phase, which is completed in Santa Fe, NM.
  - f. Upon completion of the oral interview phase, the applicant is given a conditional offer of employment contingent upon passing the psychological, medical, and Chief selection phases.
  - g. Upon appointment to the Academy, the recruit will be provided with an orientation handbook.
  - h. All elements of the selection process will be scored, evaluated, and processed in a uniform manner.
  - i. If an applicant is disqualified during any phase of the selection process, a letter will be sent to the applicant stating that he/she has been disqualified.
  - j. If an applicant is disqualified or not selected by the Chief of the State Police or designee, the applicant's records, including background, polygraph, and medical, if applicable, will be maintained by the Training and Recruiting Bureau, pursuant to state records retention requirements. Any applicant may re-apply provided they have not had a lifetime disqualifier. Any person who fails the psychological exam must wait one year before re-applying.
  - k. All selection-related materials including medical examinations and psychological examinations will be kept in a secure area, when not in use, with access restricted to authorized personnel. These materials will be maintained and discarded, pursuant to state records retention requirements (NMAC). This will ensure that all materials will be disposed of in a manner that prevents disclosure of the information within.
4. Elements and activities in the Lateral Selection process
- a. Lateral Application Process: Applicants are responsible for travel arrangements and expenses. Applicants should plan for up to 3 days per trip to Santa Fe, depending on the phase of the application process.
  - b. Online account (Interest Card): Applicants can begin the process, by going to <https://www.nmdpsapp.com/> and following the link to the NMSP Lateral Academy. Applicants create an account and a recruiter will contact the applicant by phone or e-mail. Interested applicants may also call the NMSP Training & Recruiting Bureau at: 505-827-9200.
  - c. Application: The applicant will complete the online application through the [nmsp.com](https://www.nmsp.com) account and a recruiter will contact the applicant by phone or email to schedule the next phase of the application process.



## STATE POLICE RECRUITING AND SELECTION

- d. **Physical Fitness Assessments:** The physical fitness assessment occurs prior to the written test. An applicant who does not pass the physical fitness portion of the testing can continue with the process. However, all applicants must pass the physical fitness assessment prior to the academy start date. An applicant's performance in the physical fitness assessment will be taken into consideration during the Chief's final selection.

See below for the 4 components of the PT assessment.

Activity	Distance /Amount	Minimum time/Reps
Upper Body Strength	1 min max # of push-ups	15 repetitions
Muscular Endurance	1 min max # of sit-ups	27 repetitions
Aerobic Power	1.5 mile run	Above 6000' – 15:54
		Below 6000' – 15:14
Anaerobic Power	300 meter run	71 seconds

- e. **Written Test:** The applicant must take the written aptitude test. The written test is an assessment of reading comprehension, grammar, and mathematics.
- f. **Polygraph Examination:** The applicant will be scheduled for a polygraph examination. All polygraph examinations will be conducted by personnel trained in these areas.
- Applicants will be provided with a list of areas, from which polygraph questions will be taken, prior to the actual examination.
  - All pre-employment questionnaires are kept confidential.
  - Polygraph results will be used as an investigative aid only and in no way will the polygraph be the sole determination for disqualifying someone from the application/recruitment process.
- g. **Background Investigation:** A background investigation will be conducted by a background investigator trained in gathering the required information. The background investigation shall include, at a minimum:
- Criminal history.
  - Verification of at least six personal references.
  - Verification of qualifying credentials.
- h. **Oral Board Interview**
- i. **Conditional Offer of Employment**
- j. **Psychological Evaluation**
- k. **Medical Screening**
- l. **Chief's Selection:** The Chief selects the top applicants for the next NMSP Lateral Academy.
- m. If an applicant is disqualified during any phase of the selection process, a letter will be sent to the applicant stating that he/she has been disqualified.

- n. If an applicant is disqualified or not selected by the Chief of the State Police or designee, the applicant's records, including background, polygraph, and medical, if applicable, will be maintained by the Training and Recruiting Bureau, pursuant to state records retention requirements. Any applicant may re-apply provided they have not had a lifetime disqualifier. Any person who fails the psychological exam must wait one year before re-applying.
  - o. All selection-related materials including medical examinations and psychological examinations will be kept in a secure area, when not in use, with access restricted to authorized personnel. These materials will be maintained and discarded, pursuant to state records retention requirements (NMAC). This will ensure that all materials will be disposed of in a manner that prevents disclosure of the information within.
  - p. FTO Program (after graduation): A minimum of three (3) weeks of on the job training with a field training officer after graduation from the Lateral Academy.
5. Lateral Recruiting Incentive Programs:
- a. **Officer Pay Lateral Program:** Designed to offer a higher STEP/Pay incentive to officers who have two (2) or more years of previous New Mexico law enforcement service. Refer to DPS Policy PRS: 16 for specific information on salary and benefits. Lateral Applicants will begin receiving pay at this rate immediately upon entering the academy.
  - b. **Guaranteed Duty Location Program:** Designed to attract and keep officers in the community where they are from. The program starts at the beginning of the recruiting process NMSP Lateral Applicants will be informed of available duty assignments during the selection process. Available duty assignments will be based on several factors which may include position numbers, vacancies, and incumbent officer transfer requests. The Chief has the ultimate discretion to offer duty assignments to any given location in the state. The Lateral applicant will be able to choose a duty assignment/location from those offered and the applicant will know where he/she will be stationed prior to starting the academy. This location will be guaranteed upon successful completion of the Lateral Academy.

### C. Probationary Period

Newly commissioned officers are required to complete a two-year probationary period. A newly commissioned officer's probation may be extended by the Chief or designee. All newly commissioned personnel, who are required by law to meet the 60-hour college credit requirement, will have a period of 2 years, from the date of commission, to achieve these hours. An officer required to meet the college requirement, who fails to do so within this 2-year period may, at the discretion of the Chief, be granted up to 12 additional months to achieve the 60-hours of college credit. The Chief may take into consideration factors such as the number of hours achieved thus far, the number of hours remaining, as well as the demonstrated effort on the part of the officer in achieving these hours in determining if additional time will be granted. If an officer is granted additional time to achieve the required hours, that officer's probationary period will be extended until such time as the requirement is met. In no event will an officer be given an amount of time to exceed 3 years, from the date of commission, to achieve all required college hours.

Newly certified/commissioned officers with 2 or more years of military or law enforcement service are exempt from the college credit requirement.

Any previous years of patrol experience, which may have been gained from a prior agency for lateral officers will be utilized in determining the eligibility status in testing



## STATE POLICE RECRUITING AND SELECTION

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for specialty assignments. This includes testing for specialty teams, investigations bureau, the governor's security detail, and so forth.

### **D. Leave Accrual**

While in the academy, recruits and laterals will accrue compensatory time up to an amount specified by the Chief. This time will be used in the event the new employee requires the use of leave due to illness or personal reasons.

### **7.0 ATTACHMENTS**

**NONE**

### **8.0 APPROVAL**

**APPROVED BY:** Jason R. Bowie **DATE:** 10-07-21  
DPS Cabinet Secretary